# Retina UK Professionals’ Conference

# 16 April 2021

## How to access the Conference

The conference is being held virtually and cameras will not be switched on. To access the conference, please follow the link on our website: [www.RetinaUK.org.uk/prof-conf](http://www.RetinaUK.org.uk/prof-conf). In the unlikely event the link is not working on the day, or you have trouble accessing it, you can use this alternative link: [www.fundraisingeverywhere.com/retinaukprofsconf](http://www.fundraisingeverywhere.com/retinaukprofsconf).

## Welcome

Welcome

On behalf of Retina UK’s trustees and staff, a very warm welcome to our first online Professionals’ Conference.

We are delighted you have chosen to join us today. We know this will have been a challenging year for you all, as you strive to provide high quality support and reassure your clients and patients in these difficult times.

We have a busy programme ahead of us with a focus on the important topics of genetics and mental health. We will learn about the importance of genetics testing and counselling for those with inherited sight loss conditions and provide information to help you support your clients’ wellbeing and mental health.

I would encourage you to get involved in the day by asking questions of our speakers using the online chat facility, by email or phone.

Thank you to all the speakers who have kindly agreed to share their wide ranging expertise and experience with us today, and also our sponsors and exhibitors.

Enjoy the conference.

Tina Houlihan   
Chief Executive, Retina UK

## Questions

As you will not be able to raise your hand to ask questions on the day, we have a number of ways for you to find out about what is important to you. You can:

* Submit your questions in advance Please send your question via email to [info@RetinaUK.org.uk](mailto:info@RetinaUK.org.uk), remember to include your name and the session that it relates to. If you are not able to email us, you can contact our team on 01280 821334.
* Email us on the day You can email any questions on the day to [info@RetinaUK.org.uk](mailto:info@RetinaUK.org.uk).
* Telephone us on the day Our friendly team will be available to take your questions over the phone during the conference. Simply call us on 01280 821334.
* Submit your question on the conference website There is an interactive chat feature that you can use to submit questions, simply type in your question and click send.

Please be aware that we may not be able to ask our speakers all of the questions we receive, but we will endeavour to get answers for as many as we can.

## Technical support

If you are unsure of how to access the conference, please contact the team ahead of the day and they will arrange support for you, you can either email [services@RetinaUK.org](mailto:services@RetinaUK.org). uk or telephone 01280 821334.

## Social Media

We’ll be tweeting throughout the day on our Twitter feed @RetinaUK – if you’re sharing thoughts about the conference on social media, you can use the hashtag #RetinaUKProfs. We’ll also be uploading photos and updates on our Facebook page.

## Feedback

Your views are important to us, please take a few minutes to share your feedback after the event by completing the form here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YJQCZF8>.

## Sponsors

Thank you to our event sponsors for their support in delivering the Retina UK Annual Conference 2021.

* Biogen
* Janssen
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## Exhibitors

Thank you to the following organisation for exhibiting with us.

Sight and Sound Technology  
[www.sightandsound.co.uk](http://www.sightandsound.co.uk)  
01604 798070  
[info@sightandsound.co.uk](mailto:info@sightandsound.co.uk)

## Programme

10:00am Conference Welcome and Chief Executive’s Address  
Tina Houlihan, Retina UK Chief Executive

10:30am Genetic Testing for Inherited Disorders of the Retina  
Dr Panagiotis Sergouniotis

11:00am Unlock Genetics   
Kate Arkell & Denise Rawden

11:15am Genetics Q&A

11:45am Supporting your clients’ mental health   
Dr Ian McCubbin

12:15pm Q&A

12:30pm Journey to a Treatment   
Professor James Bainbridge & Jake Ternent

12:50pm Q&A

1.05pm My Eyesite & Gene.Vision   
Professor Andrew Webster & Professor Mariya Moosajee

1.35pm Closing Remarks Tina Houlihan

## Speakers and Presenters

### Tina Houlihan

Tina Houlihan is Chief Executive at Retina UK. Since joining the charity, four years ago, the organisation has grown so the team can provide even more information and support services, and work toward funding more medical research to find effective treatments for inherited progressive sight loss conditions.

Tina plays an active role within the vision sector, such as co-chairing the Vision UK Research Cures & Treatment Panel and becoming a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers. Tina has raised the profile of Retina UK, not only in the charity sector, but also with professionals, individuals and families close to inherited sight loss, creating tangible benefits to those the charity represents. She leads a team committed to making sure that our community is being heard, getting the very best information and services and that the charity has the greatest possible impact.

Tina has 15 years’ experience in the charity and public sector; before becoming the Chief Executive at Retina UK Tina ran the East and North Herts NHS Hospitals’ Charities for over five years and before that held senior fundraising roles in national charities. Tina has a BSc in Science and Social Sciences, a postgraduate diploma in Marketing, an MSc in Leadership and Management in Public Services and is currently working toward a Graduate Law degree.

### Dr Panagiotis Sergouniotis

Panos underwent medical training at the University of Athens and postgraduate ophthalmology training in London, Cambridge and Manchester. He undertook a PhD at UCL & Moorfields Eye Hospital studying the genetics of retinal dystrophies with Professor Andrew Webster and Professor Tony Moore. In 2014, he was appointed NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow at Manchester Royal Eye Hospital and since 2017 he has been working as an NIHR Clinical Lecturer at the University of Manchester. Panos’ main clinical interest is ophthalmic genetics and his research involves working in the intersection of genomics, bioinformatics and ophthalmology. A key aim of his work is to enable personally tailored prognosis and management through the integration of genomic and clinical data.

### Kate Arkell

Kate Arkell studied Physiological Sciences at Newcastle University before starting her medical research charity career at the Motor Neurone Disease Association, where she learned a huge amount about science communication, grant administration and the range of ways in which charities can facilitate research progress. Kate moved on to a research management role at the Progressive Supranuclear Palsy Association before coming to Retina UK as Research Development Manager. She is excited by the very clear progress towards effective treatments for inherited sight loss and is keen to facilitate the Retina UK community’s engagement with research.

### Denise Rawden

Denise’s background was in banking and customer management before moving to the charity sector in 2004 following the death of her husband in a road crash. Denise helped to set up a new local charity supporting victims of road crashes and their families. As Volunteer Support Manager, Denise recruited, trained and supported a team of volunteers who themselves had been personally affected or bereaved through road collisions. The volunteers provided emotional support and practical information to help them navigate the difficult journeys ahead.

Denise joined Retina UK in 2013, managing and supporting the helpline team. In 2017 she moved into the role of Information and Support Manager. Denise is passionate about supporting our community by offering emotional support and providing accurate, clear information to help people make informed choices about their future. Denise’s role involves organising events, attending sight loss exhibitions and supporting the Helpline and Talk and Support services.

### Dr Ian McCubbin

Dr Ian McCubbin is a Principal Clinical Psychologist and Chartered member of the British Psychological Society. His first degree (Psychology; MA (hons)) was attained from the University of Glasgow in 2003 and he completed his Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPSych) at the University of Oxford in 2011. For the past 8 years he has been funded by the charity Fight Against Blindness (FAB) to provide psychological assessment and support to children with a visual impairment who are under the care of the Eye Hospital in Oxford.

### Jake Ternent

Jake is 24 years old and lives in the north-east of England. He loves sports, especially football and specifically Newcastle United football club. Last year he describes himself as “one of the luckiest people in the country because I received life changing treatment at Moorfields eye hospital in London”.

### Professor James Bainbridge

Professor Bainbridge is Chair of Retinal Studies at UCL and Consultant Ophthalmologist at Moorfields Eye Hospital. The aim of his research is to develop novel advanced therapies for diseases of the retina. He performed the world’s first gene therapy for inherited blindness and in 2018 was one of the recipients of the Champalimaud Vision Award, the largest prize in ophthalmology. In 2020 he was elected Fellow of the UK Academy of Medical Sciences.

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